



FAA Intercom

Intercom Update

Beginning with this edition, the *FAA Intercom* can be viewed in full color on the Internet.

Access the publication at www.faa.gov/apa/intercomindex.htm and click on PDF. Some readers may need to download Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the color edition. An Adobe Acrobat Reader link has been provided at the *Intercom* site; just click on the link and follow the three simple steps to download. If you have difficulty with downloading Adobe Acrobat Reader, contact your technical support person for assistance.

Text-only editions will continue to be provided. Hard-copy editions of the *FAA Intercom* will continue to be published in black and white.

FAA employees who feel they have a story or story idea appropriate for the publication should forward their information to *Intercom* representatives located in their region or center (see page 8 for the list of representatives). Please remember to include your name and telephone number with your submission.

Photographs are accepted for possible publication; please provide a caption identifying individuals in the photo. Digital photos are accepted as well. *FAA Intercom* prefers "TIF" or "JPEG" digital photos.

Taking a Dive



Frayser's Comanche lays crumpled in a Missouri field.

Earlier this year at an aviation medical examiner (AME) seminar, Dr. Allen Parmet began telling the story of a pilot who lost consciousness while flying alone. Before Dr. Parmet could finish, a voice from the back of the room exclaimed, "I was that pilot!"

Dr. Robert Frayser, from Hoisington, Kansas, who was attending his first AME seminar, picked up where Parmet had left off, detailing an amazing, real-life experience that occurred to him last year in Missouri.

Frayser flew out of his home airport at 7 a.m. en route to Topeka, Kansas. "I was flying alone in my Comanche 400, cruising at 5,500 feet on autopilot, with the sun coming

up on a clear, beautiful day," he recalled. All was routine as he switched the fuel selector to the auxiliary tank and set up the navigation system for his destination.

That was the last thing Frayser remembered for the next hour and a half. When he awoke, groggy from a deep sleep, he thought he was still in the air and went through landing preparations. As he became more oriented, he realized that he was on the ground, in a hay field. The engine was silent. The airplane's right wing was crumpled from the impact with a tree, but the plane was otherwise intact. Aside from
continued on page 10

In This Issue:
Read about how to ensure a happy retirement, saving the life of a good friend, three men and a baby (or is it one man and three babies?), and the latest on Core Compensation.



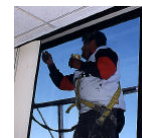
Page 3. FAA wins Telly Award.



Page 5. Coming to the rescue of a friend.



Page 11. One man and three babies.



Page 12. HQ gets an air quality report.



News in Brief

FAA Taps Lockheed Martin for Conflict Probe

The FAA has chosen Lockheed Martin to develop and deploy a powerful software tool that gives controllers the ability to detect potential conflicts when considering pilots' requests for altitude and route changes.

The User Request Evaluation Tool, also called a "conflict probe," allows controllers to strategize their decision making as long as 20 minutes ahead of time. The conflict probe is expected to be an important part of the agency's Free Flight environment, in which pilots will collaborate closely with controllers to choose the most efficient routes, speeds and altitudes for the conditions existing at the time.

The agreement speeds up the agency's National Airspace System modernization effort.

The software will be deployed to seven FAA air route traffic control centers that handle aircraft flying at higher altitudes: Memphis, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Cleveland, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Atlanta. The FAA and National Air Traffic Controllers Association worked together to develop the software.

Schedule Use-or-Lose Leave

FAA employees need to have their use-or-lose annual leave requested and approved in writing before Nov. 26. Supervisors are encouraged to ensure that their employees' annual leave is properly scheduled to avoid any loss.

Employees are advised that restored (includes exigency) leave must be used by the expiration date indicated or it will be forfeited. Employees may want to consider donating their use/lose leave to leave recipients in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program rather than losing it at the end of the leave year.

Computer Course Helps Inspectors Improve Cargo Safety

Flight Standards District Offices with computer-based instruction (CBI) capability by now should have received an interactive instruction software containing a cargo loading and surveillance course.



Aviation safety inspectors complete a CBI course lesson.

With the agency's increased emphasis on ensuring safety during the cargo loading process, this course will enable inspectors to better perform their inspection and surveillance tasks.

The course was designed and developed by Headquarters and field personnel, and is recommended training for all aviation safety inspectors. Cargo loading and handling, weight and balance, restraints, equipment serviceability, and regulatory requirements are presented in the course's seven lessons.

The course takes about six hours to complete, and should result in cost savings because no travel will be required to take the course, inspectors will not have to spend as much time away from their jobs, and less intensive training support will be needed.

Requests for copies of the software should be directed to Debbie Wilcox at (405) 954-6790. Technical questions should be directed to Kent Stephens at (202) 267-9518.

Travel Reimbursement Info Available from Coast Guard

The U.S. Coast Guard Finance Center Information Line can provide travel payment information to FAA employees under a new agreement between the two agencies.

Employees can use the Coast Guard system to check on the status of travel payments, as well as permanent change-of-station travel payments. Employees who have selected automated clearinghouse payments will have their travel reimbursements deposited in their accounts. Those who have selected Treasury checks will receive their reimbursements in the mail.

To check on the status of travel reimbursements, call (800) 564-5504, press 3, and follow the instructions. Employees can obtain travel voucher information on up to five vouchers in a six-month period. They will receive a confirmed payment date or a scheduled payment date. They also will be informed if payment is by automated clearinghouse or Treasury check.

Call Marion Isaac at (202) 267-7062 for more information.

Equity Loan News Flash

Home equity loans are now available nationwide to Transportation Federal Credit Union members on their principal residences. Eligible loans include fixed seconds, high loan-to-value options and variable-rate lines of credit.

This new service expands loan access beyond the credit union's former jurisdictions in the Washington, D.C., and Boston metropolitan areas.

The credit union serves more than 17,500 members and has more than \$90 million in assets.



FAA to Build TDWR Site in New York

After protracted negotiations, the FAA has received permission to install a Terminal Doppler Weather Radar (TDWR) inside the Gateway National Recreation Area in New York. The site is considered the best location for the TDWR, which will provide important radar coverage to LaGuardia and JFK airports.

The decision to build inside the recreation area is the result of negotiations between the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Interior. The Interior Department had environmental concerns about the TDWR, which have been allayed by the DOT and FAA.

Under the agreement, the FAA will transfer the site to the park within 90 days after the radar is commissioned. The TDWR will be removed no more than 20 years after it is commissioned, or sooner if alternative technology becomes available.

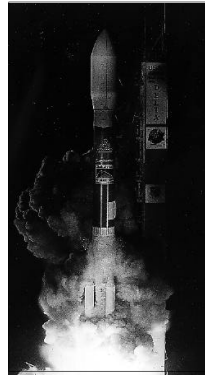
The site will be restored to grassland after the TDWR is removed. Additionally, the FAA will inform the public about the importance and science of weather radar.

Construction of the radar is expected to begin in November.

FAA-Licensed Launches Continue

The U.S. commercial space transportation industry set a new productivity benchmark when FAA-licensed Boeing Delta II rockets placed 16 communications satellites into orbit on four separate launches between June 10 and Aug. 17.

Each launch carried four Globalstar satellites to low-earth orbit in preparation for the initiation of global mobile telephone service. All of the launches took place from Boeing's launch complex at Cape Canaveral Air Station, utilizing two launch pads and the company's East and West Coast launch crews.



A Boeing Delta II lights up the night sky at Cape Canaveral.

Making the task even more daunting, each of the launch windows — the time period when a payload can achieve desired orbit — was only three minutes long. During the same 68-day period, a Delta II from the same launch complex successfully completed a government launch of a NASA satellite.

FAA is on the Telly

Representatives from the Office of Communication, Navigation, and Surveillance Systems recently presented Administrator Jane Garvey with a Telly Award the office received for its video,

Aeronautical Data Link: The Key to the Future.

The awards are given each year to recognize production excellence in non-broadcast videos. More than 10,000 videos were nominated in 1999.

The FAA's Data Link program office produced the video with ARINC, NATCA, and Boeing. The partnership was created by the Data Link office to address misconceptions about the program in the controller workforce. The video premiered at the NATCA convention in September 1998 to an audience of 1,000 controllers. Since that time, more than 4,000 copies of the video have been distributed around the world in two languages and three video formats.

The office's production team has recently released a second video with an international partnership that comprises five international airlines, 100,000 union pilots and controllers, the world's largest aircraft manufacturers, cargo carriers, and the 28 countries of EUROCONTROL.

A third video, in partnership with the National Business Aviation Association, premiered in October at the group's convention in Atlanta.

Copies of the videos can be obtained in Room 412 of the Headquarters Building, or by cc:Mailing Joanne Orsena.



Di Reimold (left), acting lead for the Communications Integrated Product Team, and Jim Harrod from the Data Link program office present the administrator with a Telly Award.





Ten Ways Federal Employees Can Mess up Their Retirement*


**And How to Avoid Them*


The National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) offers the following advice on common mistakes made by federal retirees. For more information, access NARFE's Web site at www.narfe.org.


1. Failure to elect a survivor benefit for a spouse who has her/his own income or retirement. Dying before your spouse does not necessarily mean that all your expenses and bills die with you. The expenses for the automobile, house and other items that you shared jointly with your spouse continue. Do you want your spouse to continue to live in the style to which he/she has become accustomed?

 *Elect a survivor benefit for a spouse.*


 2. Pick up your first retirement check, sell your house and head for a warmer climate. Moving before you have assessed all the pros and cons of shifting to a new location can be an expensive mistake. You must explore financial, emotional, cultural, medical, and other considerations at both your current and prospective locations. You need to consider whether to rent or purchase a residence and determine the taxes you will be required to pay.

 *Do some serious soul searching. Consider the realities and not the dreams of retirement.*


 3. Failure to consider your spouse's routine when you retire. Your spouse may not be eligible to retire or may never retire from being a homemaker. After 30 years, your spouse may not want you fiddling around the house, in the way, for an extra 10 hours a day.

 *Don't retire until you have something to do. Plan your retirement. This does not mean a full schedule of volunteer work or projects. It means that you will need an excuse for getting up and getting started in the morning.*


4. Failure to realistically review your life insurance needs at retirement. Monthly premiums for all of the optional plans (A, B and C) of the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance program increase by nearly 50 percent at age 55 and again at age 60. Many retirees simply keep the same insurance coverage they had as employees. Do you need the insurance?

 *Consider your basic financial needs and discuss what insurance option best meets your specific situation.*


5. Expecting to receive a full Social Security retirement based on your total Social Security earnings. The Windfall Elimination Provision will reduce the earned Social Security benefit of a federal worker who retired after 1985 by 40 to 50 percent.

 *Adjust your retirement budget accordingly and work for repeal of the law.*


6. Not electing a survivor benefit for a spouse, either at retirement or upon marriage (remarriage) after retirement. In order to retain employment in a Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) plan, the surviving spouse must receive a survivor benefit.

 *Elect a small survivor benefit. The survivor can pay FEHB premiums directly if the annuity is not sufficient to cover the premium. Recent retirees can (within 18 months of retirement) can change to elect a survivor benefit. However, a large monetary penalty must be made in order to make an after-retirement election. Survivor benefits for a post-retirement remarriage must be elected within two years of the marriage.*

7. Failure to meet the requirement to have FEHB coverage for at least five years before retiring in order to retain the coverage in retirement. For example, a federal employee covered by a spouse's private sector health plan opts not to enroll in FEHB while employed (or is not enrolled for five years). The spouse later loses coverage or benefits are reduced, usually upon retirement. As a retiree, the annuitant cannot enroll in FEHB.

 *Enroll in the least expensive self-only FEHB plan for at least five years before retiring in order to continue FEHB into retirement and preserve the opportunity to later change to family coverage at open season.*

8. Electing a self-only FEHB enrollment when spouse has other non-federal health plan coverage. Upon death of annuitant, spouse would not be able to retain FEHB. The retiree must not only elect a survivor benefit, but also have a family enrollment in effect at the time of death.

 *Change to a family enrollment during the next open season.*



Meeting Agenda Changes to Include Life or Death

9. Enrolling in the high option of a fee-for-service plan when the low (or standard) option provides good benefits at a substantially lower premium. For example, the Blue Cross/Blue Shield standard self-only monthly premium in 1998 was \$50.31 (compared to \$139.65 for the High Option).

For Medicare enrollees especially, the standard option for any fee-for-service plan combined with Parts A and B of Medicare provides nearly full coverage of all health care expenses with little out-of-pocket costs.



At age 65, change to a less expensive plan. This change can be made at any time from 30 days before age 65 or any time thereafter (including during a future open season).

10. Two federal retirees elect two self-only, fee-for-service enrollments instead of one family enrollment. While two self-only enrollments cost slightly less (in premiums) than one family, there are several benefit losses that may outweigh the slight premium savings.

Two self-only enrollees must meet separate deductibles, co-payments, co-insurance and catastrophic protection benefits. For example, the Blue Cross/Blue Shield standard family catastrophic level in 1998 was \$2,000 (if preferred providers were used). Each enrollee in two self-only enrollments would have to meet the \$2,000 catastrophic level, or \$4,000 total.



Change to family coverage during a future open season.

A member of the Hualapai Indian tribe owes his life to a group of FAA employees who grew suspicious about his absence from a meeting and ended up going the extra mile to help his recovery.

Tribe representatives visited FAA Headquarters in July to discuss issues concerning Grand Canyon overflights. The group has been meeting regularly with FAA representatives for three years and developed a strong professional relationship. That relationship turned decidedly more personal when FAAers Bill Marx, Tina Hunter and Tim Fleming learned that Edgar Walema, vice-chairman of the tribal council, had taken ill and would not be attending the meeting.

Fleming, an experienced paramedic, insisted on checking Walema while his partners continued with the meeting. He found Walema semi-conscious and in the initial stages of shock. Walema's pulse was down and he was cold and sweaty. Fleming propped Walema's legs up to increase blood circulation to the brain and called 911.

Walema was diagnosed with bleeding ulcers and hospitalized in the intensive care unit, where he required five pints of blood.

Hunter and Fleming visited everyday during the week as Walema's condition seemed to stabilize.

The following weekend, Marx called to double check about Walema's release date, only to find that his condition had worsened and would require emergency surgery. Marx immediately contacted the tribe to keep them apprised of the situation.

All three continued with their hospital visits, with Hunter showing up every day. Fleming needed to fly down to Peach Springs, Ariz., to finish up negotiations with the tribe, so he arranged to escort Walema back home.

Healthy again, Walema sent thank-you letters to Marx, Fleming and Hunter. In his message to Fleming, he wrote, "I feel that I owe you my life because of the sad shape I was in when you came to aid me in my hotel room." He remembered nothing leading up to his operation, except the visits of his FAA friends. "I will always be thankful to you for all that has happened and the friendship that came out of this."

Which goes to show, some meetings are more successful than others.



Hunter and Fleming visit Walema in the hospital.



Around the FAA



Airports Conference Scheduled

The Alaskan Region's Airports Division and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities co-sponsored the Alaska Airports Conference Oct. 19-21.

Attendees discussed issues critical to the successful development and management of all airports in Alaska, and provided the latest information on the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

FAA officials also gave an AIP legislative update, provided airport development funding information, and participated in the airport certification breakout and the airport master record overview session. Also covered were compliance issues regarding airport revenue use, rates and charges.



Administrator Addresses National Black Coalition

The Central Region National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) hosted the 23rd Annual NBCFAE National Training Conference in Kansas City.

Administrator Jane Garvey, Central Region Administrator John Turner, and members of the agency's management board participated in a question-and-answer session with attendees.

Nearly 300 attendees received credit for attending four-hour training courses conducted by the Center for Management Development. The courses included: *Thinking Outside the Box*, *Influencing Skills*, *Managing Yourself Through Change*, *Managing Your Workload for Success*, and *Ethics and Challenges*.

Additional courses conducted by FAA employees included an *EEO Practical Questions and Answers* session, *Presentations with PowerPoint 97*, *Taking the Stress Out of Conflict*, and *Preparing Yourself for an Interview*.

Millie Strickland, Central Region EEO internal program manager, received the 1999 Non-Supervisor EEO Award.



Art Show, Auction Planned for Child Care Center

The William J. Hughes Technical Center is hosting an art show and auction to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the National Aviation Facilities Experimental Center's child care center.

The child care center is a licensed and accredited facility that offers a curriculum-based educational system and developmental approach for children from eighteen months to five years old. Proceeds from the auction will be used to fund the center.

The show and auction will be conducted by the Heisman Fine Arts Gallery and will feature works by Monet, Picasso, Cézanne, Wyeth and others. Rarely seen, limited-edition prints from the Barnes Foundation will be among the offerings.



Newark ATCT Contract Awarded

The Eastern Region's Logistics Division awarded a \$22.4 million contract to Torcon, Inc., of Westfield, N.J., to construct a new 335-foot airport traffic control tower at Newark International Airport. The structure will include a 12,000-square-foot base building. Construction begins this month; commissioning is expected by November 2002.



Bartanowicz Honored by Massachusetts Governor

New England Regional Administrator Dr. R. S. "Bart" Bartanowicz was honored recently by Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci for outstanding contributions to aviation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Cellucci complimented Bartanowicz's work with the Massachusetts Port Authority encouraging air travelers to buckle up when driving to and from Logan Airport. He assisted the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission in writing a grant to purchase two flight simulators to be used for promoting aviation education activities in Massachusetts.

Bartanowicz also was recognized for creating a cooperative environment between federal and state agencies on various aviation-related issues.

Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission Chairman Sherman Saltmarsh presented the award.



Bartanowicz (left) receives a plaque of recognition from Saltmarsh on behalf of the governor of Massachusetts.



Denver Facility Dedicates DSR, HOCSR

A new Display System Replacement (DSR) was dedicated at the Denver Air Route Traffic Control Center to serve parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, South Dakota, Montana, Kansas, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah.

The DSR, which has been in use for several weeks, will help controllers manage air traffic in a facility that handled 1.6 million aircraft last year. The state-of-the-art equipment gives controllers the ability to handle an average of 5,000 flights per day by replacing 20- to 30-year-old equipment with upgraded displays, computer hardware and software. DSR also can be upgraded to meet future requirements.

Also dedicated was the Host and Oceanic Computer System Replacement (HOCSR), which replaces computer equipment that produces and processes information on aircraft movements through the National Airspace System. HOCSR will play a key role as the agency introduces new services and concepts in air traffic.



An FAA employee provides some woodworking skills for the benefit of a local shelter.

Getting a Head Start on CFC

FAA employees in the Chattanooga, Tenn., area got off to an early start on this year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) by volunteering to participate in the "CFC Day of Caring."

Ten employees from Air Traffic, Airway Facilities, and the NAS Implementation office helped build a fence for a local shelter for abused children. The fence offers privacy and protection for the children, as well as a little "life" with colorful decorations and characters.

The "one-day" project actually took much more time because of the extensive work involved in constructing a new fence and the elaborate woodwork involved in cutting out plywood cats, birds, balloons and other shapes to attach to the new fence.



Air Traffic Records Set in Southwest

The tower at Houston/George Bush (Intercontinental) set two daily records Aug. 19 with 1,461 airport operations and 1,485 instrument operations. The Albuquerque, N.M., tower set a record Aug. 13 with 1,517 instrument operations.

Houston/George Bush (Intercontinental) TRACON also set a monthly record with 74,253 instrument operations in August.

New monthly airport operations records were established in August by the following towers: Amarillo, Texas, 12,994 operations; Beaumont, Texas, 6,102; Dallas (Love Field), 21,448; Austin, Texas, 30,960; and Fort Smith, Ark., 24,321.



Screened Out as the Best

Laura Espinoza, an on-site duty manager handling security for American Airlines, was presented with the Great Lakes Region's Screener of the Year Award.

Espinoza works at American's Terminal 3 checkpoint at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. In just three years, she has advanced to a supervisory position, in part because she has passed 100 percent of FAA and Air Transport Association (ATA) security tests.

Luanne Wills-Merrell, Great Lakes acting regional executive manager, presented the award, which is sponsored by the FAA Security Division, ATA and Airline Pilots Association.



Around the FAA

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The "Eagle" has Landed

Employees from the FAA's Western-Pacific Region helped staff a One DOT booth at the pier in Los Angeles during public tours of the Barque Eagle, a sailing vessel once used to train cadets for the German Navy.

Following World War II, the ship was taken as a war prize by the United States. The Eagle now serves as a seagoing classroom for the future officers of the United States Coast Guard. It is the first time in 10 years that the Eagle has visited the California coast. In addition to information on the Eagle, FAA representatives provided details to the public about various DOT programs and the Garrett A. Morgan program. Transportation safety information was also available.



(From left) Sandy Monge, Paul Foster and Barbara Keller represented the Western-Pacific Region at a Garrett A. Morgan event.



Training Symposium Draws Excellent Response

The FAA Academy's first-ever International Aviation Training Symposium proved very successful, with more than 250 delegates attending the event in Oklahoma City. Forty percent of the attendees were from other countries.

Many positive comments about the event were received from international participants, FAA employees from the international offices, sponsors, and others attending the event.

"It was a very impressive symposium, and I am sure it will have a big payoff in the years ahead," noted Dick Rodine, Aeronautical Center deputy director. "FAA and Aeronautical Center organizations that participated, sent volunteers, served as panel members, or came to the events were a very important part of its success. This support is really appreciated," he added.

The symposium's final proceedings will be published by the end of November. Contact LaDonna Kluge at (405) 954-1894 for copies.

Keep in touch with *Intercom*

FAA employees who would like to submit story ideas for the *FAA Intercom* should contact their regional/center *Intercom* representatives listed below.

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Survey Says...

The Corporate Core Compensation Implementation Team provides the following information about the role of market surveys in the FAA Core Compensation Plan.

What is a market survey?

Market surveys are routinely used in the private sector to set pay levels that will attract and retain the kinds of employees needed to run an organization.

Highly skilled laboreconomists typically conduct these surveys. The economists collect and analyze salary data from a variety of carefully selected organizations. They provide aggregated data to the organizations surveyed. The participating organizations then use the data analyses to determine appropriate and competitive pay levels. The FAA has been involved in these marketsurveys for a few years, in preparation for implementing the Core Compensation Plan.

Why does the FAA use market surveys?

From the start, a key tenet of the new FAA compensation system was to create a pay structure that is market-driven. Using market surveys allows the FAA to get the data needed to ensure that it can compete with private industry and other organizations in attracting and retaining the employees it needs.

How does the FAA choose market surveys?

The FAA sets very high standards for determining what market survey sources to use. The key criteria for selecting sources are:

- ◆ Identifying the right mix of companies and jobs that match the FAA and positions in its workforce.
- ◆ Using data gathered by companies specializing in salary surveys.

- ◆ Ensuring a high-quality process is used for matching jobs based on content — not title.
- ◆ Having the utmost confidence in the data collection and distribution processes.

The agency recognizes the aerospace and airline industry as the prime industry group for comparing salaries. After evaluating a variety of private survey sources, the FAA chose a company to use for its primary survey and created a customized peer group, including 40 major companies in the airline and aerospace industry.

In addition, the FAA uses a number of other survey sources from which to gather information, including additional industries if necessary (for example, medical positions). The agency also recognizes that other labor markets compete for our jobs, such as other federal agencies. Although these survey sources are considered secondary, they still must meet the agency's rigorous quality checks.

What market data can the FAA share with employees?

In order to obtain market survey data, the FAA must sign confidentiality agreements and agree to abide by each survey source's confidentiality rules. In conducting and participating in salary surveys, it is extremely important that individual company data is treated confidentially because it is considered proprietary.

Since the agency must abide by these confidentiality agreements, individual company data gathered through the survey cannot be shared. What can be shared are the types of companies that are participating in the survey and the average market data for position/series matched (for example, engineers at each pay band level).

Will the new pay bands for 2000 be determined soon?

Yes. The FAA is now analyzing the most recent market survey data to determine the pay bands for the Core Compensation Plan in 2000. These updated pay bands will be announced shortly.



Sweet Dreams and Soft Landings

continued from page 1

some minor cuts and bruises, he seemed uninjured.

The plane, trimmed for cruise flight and on autopilot, had flown a straight course over Kansas and into Missouri until it ran out of fuel, at which point the plane landed via autopilot. Since the engine had stopped, no one heard the aircraft glide to a landing on the field. "I was alone, disoriented, injured, and had a severe headache and ringing in my ears," Frayser recalled.

Extracting himself from the aircraft, Frayser struggled a quarter of a mile through snow-flecked fields to a farmhouse. "I tried to explain to the farmer what had happened. He probably thought I was crazy," Frayser said. The farmer called for help and Frayser was taken to a local hospital, where the emergency room physician put him on 100 percent oxygen. He had a few cuts and bruises, sore ribs, and a fractured left wrist.

What had caused him to fall asleep? It wasn't an "alien encounter" or some unsolvable mystery. A cracked manifold in the engine had allowed carbon monoxide — a deadly, odorless gas — to seep into the cabin through the heater. The crack, which had apparently opened after the plane's last



Frayser (center) shows off his replacement Comanche 440.

annual inspection, was concealed by the heat shield and could not be detected during the pre-flight inspection.

Frayser did not have a carbon monoxide detector aboard. There were no early warnings or symptoms to alert him to the problem. "I just went to sleep," he said.

Of course, luck had a lot to do with his survival. Had his glide angle been a little lower, he would have hit power lines. Another 30 minutes in the air and he probably would have succumbed to carbon monoxide poisoning. Fortunately, the aircraft ran out of fuel before the carbon monoxide reached lethal levels.

Frayser did do two things, however, that probably saved his life. First, he had a

good autopilot that was capable of landing the plane. Second, he had quit smoking six months earlier, so his blood had a reduced amount of carbon monoxide from inhaling cigarette smoke. That may have made a big difference because the level of carbon monoxide in his blood was estimated at 44 percent when he exited the plane. Carbon monoxide levels of 50 percent are usually considered lethal.

The Comanche didn't fare as well as the pilot. It's now in an aircraft salvage yard. After the accident, 20 aircraft from Frayser's airfield were inspected and three were found to have cracked manifolds.

Frayser says he now has a new Comanche 400, identical to the old one, "except it is blue instead of red — and I now fly with a good carbon monoxide detector in the cockpit."

A Kansas hayfield provided a relatively soft landing spot for Frayser.



This article was written by Douglas R. Burnett, Aviation Medical Examiner Program team manager at the Civil Aeromedical Institute. It appeared in a slightly different form in the Spring 1999 edition of the FAA's Federal Air Surgeon's Medical Bulletin.



Back to Headquarters

Once, Twice, Three Times a Baby

FAA Intercom receives many photographs every month. Most are business-related, of course, with plenty of handshaking, award presenting and speech giving. Every once in a while, we get a photo that sparks the imagination or simply demands attention.

This month's photo is of Drazen Gardilcic, an assistant international manager in the Air Traffic Service. Readers of the old *Headquarters Intercom* may remember a story about Drazen and his love of Austin-Healey automobiles. As his friend and fellow Austin-fanatic Allen Feldman mentioned, that car could be considered Drazen's baby . . . until 11 months ago, that is.

Now the Austin is going to have to vie for attention with Drazen's triplet daughters, Katina, Danova and Alexandra, who were born last November. He couldn't resist tooting his own horn. "I consider myself the luckiest guy around," he said.

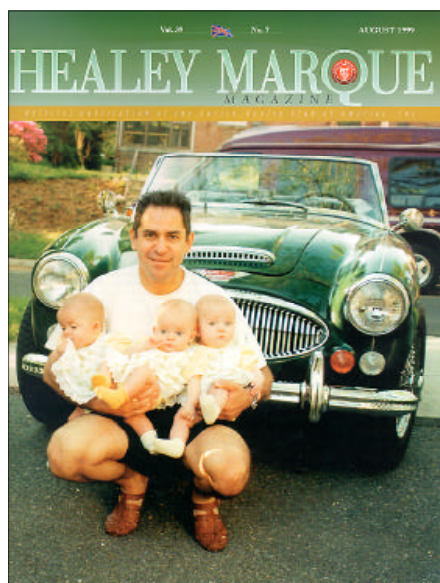
Meanwhile, the Austin isn't getting as much roadwork as it used to. Drazen admitted to parental neglect when — for the first time ever — he let the car's battery die. "Maybe it's an indication of things to come," he said.

The problem is that the girls are night owls and don't normally go to sleep until around 10 p.m. By the time the Gardilcics finish cleaning up around the house and prepare for work the next day, it's midnight. That doesn't leave much time for cruising.

Or sleep.

When asked if his own battery was dying, Drazen sounded remarkably "upbeep." "So far I'm holding up. I never thought I could make do with five hours of sleep."

The Austin got one last moment in the



Drazen Gardilcic has a handful of cuties with (from left) Katina, Danova and Alexandra. The photo was snapped in June when the girls were about 7 months old. Note the van — the Gardilcics' new "vehicle of choice" — looming behind the Austin-Healey.

high beams when it was featured on the **cover of** *Healey Marque Magazine*, a publication devoted to Austin-Healeys. Of course, it shared the limelight with, you guessed it, Drazen and the triplets. Looming in the background of the photo is the Gardilcics' new vehicle of choice — *gasp* — a minivan.

With the Gardilcics' days devoted to the triplets, it's unclear when the Austin will be driven again on a regular basis. Maybe when Katina, Danova and Alexandra get their drivers licenses?

Living Large in a Limo

Human Resources' Rebecca Windear was living large and turning a few heads at Headquarters as the result of a rather unusual commute on Sept. 27.

The drudgery of her normal 45-minute commute turned into something approaching luxury when a full-length white limousine picked up Windear at home and dropped her off at 800 Independence Ave. amidst the puzzled — and perhaps envious — looks of co-workers.

Windear won the free limo ride in a contest sponsored by WASH 97.1 radio and Fox 5 television. "I knew I was going to win," she said. "I needed that ride."

The interior included a TV, radio, neon lights and bar ("It was empty," assured Windear). Traffic backups lengthened her trip to just over an hour, but she wasn't complaining. "There was nothing disappointing about this," she said. Windear normally drives to a nearby church, catches a shuttle bus to Metro, and takes the subway to Headquarters.

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Back to Headquarters

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Clearing the Air at Headquarters

Results from the FAA's first comprehensive air quality survey should come as a breath of fresh air for Headquarters employees. The tests, supervised by the Operations and Maintenance Branch in the Facilities Management Division, revealed that measurements of certain types of air pollutants taken in the Headquarters building were within normal ranges, except for four areas.

A private contractor, M.A. Cecil and Associates, took 120 air samples over the course of a week in May and June to determine the level of carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, inhalable dust, and other particles throughout the building. None of these particles is considered life-threatening, but could cause mild irritation or allergic-type reactions.

The four problem areas include:

- ◆ The FAA gym had elevated levels of bacteria, believed to have developed after a flood. New carpet and shower stalls are being installed and the walls repainted to alleviate the problem.
- ◆ Room 523 had elevated levels of mold and mildew, again from water leakage. Ceiling tiles in the area have been replaced and all windows at Headquarters are being recaulked to prevent further leaking.
- ◆ High temperatures were reported in Room 711, an old conference room converted into an office. Renovation of the area and balancing of Headquarters' heating, ventilation and air conditioning system has alleviated the problem.
- ◆ Higher-than-normal levels of volatile organic compounds — which is a fancy term for the smell that comes from new carpets and furniture — were recorded in Room 628. That smell, like the "new-car" smell one experiences after a buying an automobile, is expected to fade away.

There's more good news once winter arrives. Last year's ventilation problems



A contractor caulks windows at FAA Headquarters.

should vanish into thin air now that pressure-reducing valves on each floor have been returned to service. They have not been functioning since the late 1970s when they were deactivated during the energy crisis.

This sampling will provide a baseline for continual, quarterly testing. Sampling for the fourth quarter of 1999, in fact, already has occurred.

Copies of the study are available for review at the Customer Service Center in Room 113.

Credit Union Offers Free Seminars

The Transportation Federal Credit Union offers brown-bag educational seminars to members on a wide range of topics. A question-and-answer period with instructors concludes each session. Sessions will be held from noon until 1:30 p.m. in the specified location.

Reservations are required for all sessions. Call (202)366-9400, ext. 3, to reserve seats for the following seminars:

Home Buying for First-time Buyers & Others

Nov. 3 in Nassif Room 3200

Learn how to figure what you can afford, house-hunting tips, making an offer, inspections required or recommended, closing the loan, costs and more.

Preparing to Sell Your Home

Nov. 18 in Headquarters Room 8A

Learn all the tricks of the trade for putting your home on the market in the spring, including interviewing listing agents, showing your home effectively, reviewing offers and much more.

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